

COOK FOR CONGRESS

COOK ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY

When, in a democratic society, it becomes necessary for men to take independent political action in opposition to the elected officials of their government and to demand representation for their ideas, interests, and principles, respect for their fellow citizens requires that they make known the grievances which drive them to such action.

We believe that initiating an independent campaign for Congressional representation is a serious act, one not to be undertaken lightly. It is easier for us to bear many minor ills than to face the long and arduous task of political campaigning. Nor would we rush to the public, political sphere to deal with problems that can be solved privately or administratively. But today a moment of crisis is upon us. To confront this crisis by committing less than all of ourselves and our resources would be an abdication of our responsibilities as Americans and as human beings.

Because while, since World War II, the rich nations have been getting richer and the underdeveloped nations poorer, the United States has responded to demands of men for food with chemical defoliants; to the demands of men for housing with napalm; and to the demands of men for control of their governments with Marines and B-52's.

Because, in place of balanced economic aid leading to progressive social reform, we have supported police, armies, and reactionary dictatorships.

Because the sterile fallacies of anti-communism and the cold war still dominate our foreign policy, while our attempt to impose a nuclear peace on the world has led only to bigger bombs, longer-range missiles, and nuclear proliferation. Cont. -- Next Page



Robert M. Cook of Guilford announced his candidacy for Connecticut's Third Congressional seat this Tuesday morning at Cook for Congress Headquarters, 241 Orange Street, New Haven. The 32-year-old Yale assistant professor of sociology told area newspaper, radio and television reporters that he will be the candidate of the newly formed American Independent Movement (AIM). Numerous campaign workers and well-wishers from the Third District were present at the press conference.

A native of Totowa Borough, New Jersey, Cook attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute from 1952 until 1956 and worked for a short time after graduation as an engineer at Walter Kidde and Company. From 1956 until 1959 he served as a first lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps, stationed at Quantico, Virginia and in Hawaii. He entered Princeton University in 1960 and received his Ph.D. four years later. At Princeton he studied under Professor Wilbert Moore, now president of the American Sociological Association, and Professor Charles Page,

now Provost, Stevenson College, University of California, Santa Cruz. He has been a member of the Yale faculty since 1964 and is presently a Fellow of Stiles College. He is co-editor of Readings on Social Change and is currently preparing a study on the American businessman for Random House. He is also a member of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.

Robert Cook sees foreign policy, poverty, and discrimination as the major issues of his campaign. The largest issue of his campaign, however, is what he refers to as "the general feeling of powerlessness expressed by people regarding the basic decisions facing society."

Cook and his wife Karin live in Guilford, Connecticut. They have three children, Leslie 9, Christopher 7, and Benjamin, 8 months.

Cook is currently a registered Democrat and a member of the Guilford, Connecticut Human Relations Council. He has served as advisor and teacher at the Hill Neighborhood Union in New Haven.

AIM

Editorial Staff
John Sinisi
Jon Johanning
Elizabeth Brainer
The campaign publication
of the Independent
Political Action
Committee
will be published
every two weeks.
Letters to the editor
are invited. Please
keep them short
and send them to:
AIM Editor
IPAC
241 Orange Street
New Haven,
Connecticut
Individuals or groups
not now receiving AIM
are invited to add
their names to our
mailing list.
Write to the editor or
call 787-0123.

IPAC ORGANIZATION

The Independent Political Action Committee (IPAC) was formed by citizens of the third congressional district who are concerned about the American involvement in Viet-Nam and who wish to end the exclusion of this and other pressing issues from the district's political life. The immediate concern of IPAC is the candidacy of Robert Cook for the Congressional seat from the third district. Robert Cook will appear on the ballot as a petitioning candidate under the label of the American Independent Movement (AIM).

The range of IPAC activities discussed below should make it clear that IPAC is not a Third Party in the traditional sense. Our commitment to work now for the congressional candidacy of Robert Cook is prompted (1) by the extraordinary fact of the Viet-Nam war and the host of problems, foreign and domestic, which the war has created, symbolized or aggravated, and (2) by the opportunity which a full scale political campaign offers this new organization to maximize its educational impact by raising issues traditionally avoided by the major parties. IPAC would like very much to be able to endorse truly progressive major party candidates for public office at all levels in the future. At the same time, IPAC is a permanent organization. It seeks to develop a mass constituency of progressive independent voters capable of exerting real political power on behalf of its democratically formulated programs. It will encourage the major parties to nominate really forward-looking candidates. Whenever the major parties fail to respond, IPAC will offer, to the limits of its resources, qualified independent candidates at all levels in the public interest.

Taking political education as a central theme, local branches of IPAC, now being formed, will organize local forums and public discussions concentrating on relevant areas, national and international issues. Last year Robert Cook organized such a forum in Guilford--a Viet-Nam Teach-In on the Town Green attended by several hundred residents of the community. Other possibilities for local political education might be forums addressed by experts on: the human cost of de facto segregation; the relation between defense industries, foreign policy and unemployment; problems of local city-planning and renewal programs, education, etc.

GLAIMO'S RECORD - POOR

The congressional record of Representative Robert Giaimo is viewed by his independent opponent, Robert Cook, as a study in mediocrity. This is readily apparent when Giaimo's record is measured against the major critical issues facing America today: Viet-Nam, war and peace, civil rights and civil liberties, and the massive problems of poverty and urban renewal.

On Viet-Nam, despite the example of numerous courageous Democratic congressmen, Giaimo has consistently supported Johnson's war aims and war tactics. On the general issue of war and peace, Giaimo is an unquestioning supporter of excessive military expenditures which sustain the arms race. He has not been prominent among congressmen seeking to promote international disarmament and reforms in foreign aid programs. Giaimo joins overwhelming majorities in favor of major legislation, but on less publicized votes, his record is not good. For example, he voted to give the Washington, D.C. school board authority to use corporal punishment on the largely Negro school population; and he joined southern Dixiecrats against northern liberals to postpone home rule for Washington's largely Negro citizenry. When the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party challenged the unconstitutional seating of Mississippi's segregationist congressmen elected in 1964,

On civil rights, Congressman Giaimo voted to defeat the challenge. Giaimo's civil liberties record is not impressive: he has never joined liberal Democrats in opposing appropriations for the witch-hunting House UnAmerican Activities Committee, and he has voted for HUAC's contempt citations.

On poverty and urban renewal, Congressman Giaimo's record is clearly deficient. He voted against the "Aid to Appalachia" bill, and for the amendment to the rent subsidy bill which emasculated that legislation. Although Giaimo is a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, he has not used that position to challenge the misappropriation of national resources which has resulted in a bloated military establishment and tremendous expenditures on an unjust Asian war while critical programs of domestic reform go begging. The Congressman's record on government regulation of corporations which affect the public interest includes a vote to remove the Federal Communication Commission's power to limit advertising time on radio and television.

In summary, Congressman Giaimo's record in several key areas is not the record of a dedicated and truly progressive legislator. But beyond that it is clear that he shows little initiative as a representative: in his years in the House his principal legislative accomplishment was to sponsor a helicopter subsidy bill. Obviously, he is not the kind of man who would risk his political security to point out the financial and moral incompatibility between the government's foreign and domestic policies.

COOK'S SPEECH CONT.

Because today our government is engaged in a vicious, immoral, illegal, unjust, and dangerous war against the people of Viet-Nam.

Because, despite the transparency of the claim that the puppet government we support in southern Vietnam represents the people, we insist on continuing a policy which has been bankrupt for at least 16 years.

Because the rationalizations of that policy have been changed as they have been proven false, in an effort to deceive the American people and to conceal failure.

Because the war in Viet-Nam makes a mockery of the great principles upon which this country was founded, principles which have since inspired men everywhere, including the people of Viet-Nam.

Because, while the United States spends billions on the means of destruction, our great social needs at home go unmet:

--more than 34 million Americans are still poor, despite the "War on Poverty." A modest but adequate living is denied to 47 million more Americans.

--23 million non-white Americans are still denied equal opportunity, equal housing, equal education, and equal employment. In the South, registering to vote or encouraging others to register may lead to the loss of one's home, job, or life. In the North, the ghettos of our cities remain, in many cases their evils only exacerbated by programs of slum clearance and urban renewal.

--our natural resources are being depleted, our open space is fast disappearing, our water and air are polluted.

--our democracy is degenerating into a society managed by elite-dominated bureaucracies. The basic democratic principle, that men have control over those decisions which shape their lives, is fast becoming inoperative.

We have not shirked our responsibility to protest. We have written letters, signed petitions, spoken, marched, picketed, demonstrated, sent delegations. Some have gone further, have refused to pay taxes, or have flown to Saigon or Hanoi. Some have fasted. A few have burned themselves.

Yet at this most serious juncture in our history, the elected representative for this district has failed to speak out with principle and courage. I therefore declare my intention to run for the U.S. House of Representatives in the Third District of Connecticut as the candidate of a petitionary party, the American Independent Movement. We welcome the support of all those who feel as we do that something must be done, that the war in Viet-Nam must be ended, that poverty and discrimination at home must be eliminated, and that the democratic process must be rehabilitated.

DRAFT of AIM PLATFORM

The American Dream has a solid foundation; but the American Dream is tarnished. We began free from the weight of feudal oppression, but today our economic and military might supports "friendly" dictatorships and feudalistic regimes throughout the world. We began with a noble belief in the inherent worth of all human beings, but today we still live with the legacy of slavery: we have a ready toleration for racist murder in the South and the ghetto nightmare of the North; for the human victims we have mostly platitudes. We began, also, with a wealth of natural resources, from which we have constructed the world's most powerful industrial nation, with a high material standard of living. But today, in the midst of our affluence, we tolerate abject poverty on a vast scale -- up to a third of our people are poor; we have wantonly exploited our natural resources, destroyed much of the beauty of the landscape, polluted the water we drink and the air we breathe; our cities are chaotic, noisy and dirty. While these needs go untended we lavish excessive billions on a military complex for the defense of the human freedom we neglect at home and repress abroad. Today we are engaged in a vicious war against a small nation, and our conduct of that war is approaching genocidal proportions.

These contradictions between the American Dream and the American reality are not irreversible. We have the material and human resources to create a truly humane society, in which the inherent worth of every individual is an absolute value, in which poverty, exploitation, gross inequality, war and disease have been virtually eliminated, in which men's life activities -- especially their work -- can be transformed from meaningless chores into creative, self-determined activities. But if we are to work for such goals we must confront and eliminate those barriers which now block or distort reasonable movement in this direction.

We must recognize that greed has become institutionalized in our society: we blandly assume that if each man selfishly seeks his own interests the common good will result. In fact, however, gigantic industrial bureaucracies have arisen, and the governmental institutions which some people had depended on to counterbalance the corporate giants have themselves become bureaucratized special-interest groups. The degeneration of democratic society into an elite of order-givers and a mass

of order-takers leaves the public interest without an effective spokesman, and millions of individuals with little substantial control over their own lives. Neither major political party has confronted the social and individual costs of these conditions. By and large, they are content to find means of operating within the existing constellation of social forces. Internally, they are both oligarchic. The time and resources necessary to influence or control these parties is beyond the means of all but a few. Moreover, experience has shown that there is no more effective influence with the establishment of power than being able to act politically without it.

Under these circumstances, we see no alternative to building a new political organization devoted to humanistic values, an organization which embodies in its own structure and practice the principles of meaningful participation and social responsibility which we seek to advance in the nation and the community.

In sponsoring our own candidate for Congress from the Third District, we have frankly chosen a demanding task for the American Independent Movement. We have done so in the conviction that if our analysis of America's needs is at all relevant, it is relevant now and it is relevant in the Third District of Connecticut. The campaign will bring together citizens who have long been concerned about the issues in our program but who have lacked a political organization to represent them. The American Independent Movement will have an open organizational structure: our candidate will be readily accessible to all campaign workers, and active workers will be encouraged to share in decision-making. Most important, we will begin to assemble a new constituency out of diverse groups by providing a visible platform which responds to the specific needs of the district and the nation -- giving voice to interests which have been under-represented and exposing problems which have been ignored. We will make it clear that a congressional term for Robert Cook will mean initiatives for excellence in public life. By contrast, the record of the incumbent, Robert N. Giaimo, has meant acquiescence in token programs at home and a brutal war abroad.

Our program must be open-ended if it is to serve our society's needs now and in the future. It must give rise to an election platform which articulates concrete proposals to deal with current public problems and to anticipate future problems before they ripen into crises. In coming weeks and months we will be pre-occupied with the task of spelling out these concrete proposals in great detail. We will do this through a series of general meetings, already begun, which are open to all who wish to affiliate themselves with the American Independent Movement. At these meetings, position papers are presented, prepared by local citizens with specialized knowledge of major issues. These papers form the basis

for discussion and adoption of specific platform planks. In this democratic manner, we shall have created by early fall not only an electoral platform, but also a wide-ranging inventory of the needs of our community and nation at this moment in our history.

Of course it is impossible to anticipate the precise form these platform planks will take, but it is fair to say that the following principles are central to the purpose of the American Independent Movement and the Congressional campaign of Robert Cook.

PROGRAM

I. Foreign policy: The principles which guide us in foreign policy center on the need to work positively for peace and the need to place the just demands of the underdeveloped peoples for social change ahead of the private greed of special interests at home and abroad.

A. Vietnam: The war we are fighting is indefensible, morally, legally and in the light of national self-interest. The following steps constitute the core of our platform plank on Viet-Nam, already adopted by the procedure outlined above: "We believe the United States should end the war in Viet-Nam and bring our boys home. Therefore, we propose:

1. Stop all bombing, permanently and unconditionally, and declare a cease-fire.

2. Negotiate a coalition government with the National Liberation Front, Buddhists and other South Vietnamese groups.

3. Commence the phased withdrawal of all American troops.

4. Reconvene the Geneva conference to implement the 1954 agreement which calls for internationally supervised free elections on reunification and forbids any military alliance or the presence of any foreign troops.

5. Contribute \$10 billion to the U.N. for post-war Vietnamese reconstruction."

B. The third world: Our national preoccupation with Viet-Nam should not blind us to the problems of dozens of other underdeveloped nations, toward which our policies are equally short-sighted and reactionary. We must stop supporting unpopular and oppressive regimes in these countries, curb the excesses of American investors, and find positive means to aid these peoples to carry out needed social transformations. We should increase foreign aid and channel it through international agencies so that economic development can be shielded from the meddling of domestic cold warriors. Above all, we must repudiate the Dominican sort of military intervention in other people's affairs.

C. Peace: Our platform will present proposals for truly effective initiatives toward multilateral controlled disarmament. We must also return to a policy of support for the U.N. and international law
Cont. -- Next Page

PLATFORM CONT.

D. China: Now that even the Johnson Administration is defensive about our unrealistic China policy, we must propose concrete steps to recognize Communist China and urge her admission to the United Nations. And we must review the policy of military encirclement and support for Chiang Kai-Shek's ambitions of conquest, which the mainland Chinese understandably interpret as an American threat to their national survival.

II. Domestic policy: Our primary concern in domestic policy must be to oppose the continued existence of racism in our land; to expose the Madison Avenue rhetoric of the Great Society program by revealing how inadequate its programs really are; to demonstrate the close connection between military adventurism abroad and permanently delayed reform at home; and to make specific proposals for reallocating economic resources according to social priorities. By contrast the Johnson-Giaimo record amounts to tokenism at best, cynical evasion at worst.

A. Civil rights: We will insist that the Federal Government end its disgraceful delay in enforcing existing civil rights laws. We will propose new measures to combat continuing discrimination in housing, jobs, public schools, voting, court proceedings and union apprenticeship programs. But we recognize that the denial of civil equality is taking new and subtle forms in urban ghettos; we will meet these problems through new and expanded programs in housing, education, urban renewal, job creation, etc.

B. Education: The problems of education in America are massive. In the allocation of funds there is discrimination against teacher-training schools as compared with other colleges, against urban and rural schools as compared with suburban schools, against schools in poor (often Negro) neighborhoods as compared with schools in better-off neighborhoods, against Southern schools as compared with schools in other regions. These inequities and deficiencies must be corrected. But equally important, we must improve quality and extend opportunities. Every child in America, regardless of family income, should at least be guaranteed up to two years of school beyond high school if he wants it. Bureaucratic obstacles to creative teaching must be eliminated. Creative legislation can do much in these areas: the "Great Society" programs have been largely rhetoric and the token amounts provided are already being cut back in favor of guns and napalm.

C. Urban renewal: Present programs amount to tokenism. There is no comprehensive regional planning to speak of. Mass transit within and between major population centers is woefully inadequate. This fact and indiscriminate highway construction threaten to turn America into one huge traffic jam. The number of Negro and white poor in

urban slum ghettos is increasing. In the next decade we will need upwards of 6 to 7 million new housing units for low income and low middle income families, but present proposals come nowhere near that figure. The "Great Society" merely offers a token demonstration program in a few cities. But quantity is not our only concern; the human factors in urban design are continually sacrificed to the profiteering instincts of big contractors. Greater consultation with the affected urban residents at all stages of renewal is a must.

D. Poverty, employment and automation: Thirty-four million people in this country live below the Government-defined poverty level. Another 47 million live above the poverty line but below a "moderate though adequate" income of \$6000 for a family or \$3000 for an individual. We spend less money annually to meet the various problems of these 81 million Americans than we do to get to the moon. But how we spend is as important as how much we spend. We will propose new diversified programs to deal with poverty and to remove existing programs from the control of political machines and vested interests. Poor people must have more say about how their lives get changed.

Even the war-time boom has left millions of people unemployed or semi-employed. Right now 12,000 jobs are eliminated by automation every month and the rate is growing. When we take into account young people entering the job market, it is clear that this country will need 25 million new jobs in the next decade. We are not opposed to automation but Federal legislation should guarantee that workers do not bear alone the burden of technological progress. Automating industries should share with government the costs of retraining workers for jobs that exist, and in a manner that does not impose a financial sacrifice on workers' families. Anti-union laws like "14b" must go; and the minimum wage must be raised to at least \$2.00 an hour with coverage extended to many more workers.

E. Old age and health insurance: Millions of the poor are also the elderly. Existing government pensions are clearly inadequate. It is time to provide sufficient amounts and to finance them through general tax revenues instead of the regressive Social Security system. We will also propose specific programs to meet the housing, recreation and health needs of our senior citizens. In the general area of health, we favor comprehensive health insurance for every American and an immediate massive expansion of medical and dental schools to eliminate the serious shortage of doctors and nurses in this country.

F. The physical environment: Air and water pollution already pose a serious public health problem in our country, and the danger is growing. Inadequate zoning and land use laws have already gone far toward destroying the beauty of our land. We must reverse this process with stringent anti-pollution and zoning

laws, and with programs to reclaim, preserve and develop recreational lands and sea-shores for the welfare of all the people.

G. War economy and the space program: Major cutbacks in military spending can be made and should be made as part of a multinational controlled disarmament program. The tremendous profits made by the American armaments industry ought to be looked into, and if possible curbed, so that private greed does not sustain an arms race which goes beyond our legitimate defense needs and actually increase the possibility of nuclear and "limited" wars. As for the space program, it is an unjustifiable luxury so long as the pressing needs of people are not met.

H. Political reform: To insure that the people may control their own politics, we will press for reform of existing primary election laws, public financing of political campaigns, easy access for minor party candidates to the mass media, curbs to clubhouse influence in state and local government, and compulsory public disclosure of financial holdings by all public officials. We favor an end to political influence in the appointment of judges, reforms in laws governing crime and criminal procedure and massive expansion of free legal services to the poor in the interest of civil liberties and equal justice under law.

All of the above issues, and others as well, will be developed in greater detail through our platform and in the course of the campaign. Interested citizens are encouraged to join with their neighbors to promote the program of the American Independent Movement through IPAC and through the Cook for Congress groups which will organize in the coming weeks. Community groups who wish to hear Robert Cook and other speakers discuss this program before they may contact campaign headquarters at 241 Orange Street, New Haven (787-0123).

PLEASE - HELP!

READERS OF THIS NEWSLETTER WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COOK FOR CONGRESS CAMPAIGN WILL FIND A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO THEM. BESIDES JOINING THE LOCAL INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES WHICH ARE NOW FORMING THROUGHOUT THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, INDIVIDUALS MAY WISH TO VOLUNTEER SUPPLIES OR SERVICES FOR THE CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS AT 241 ORANGE STREET, NEW HAVEN (TEL. 787-0123), ROOM 3, SECOND FLOOR. BOB ZELLNER, CAMPAIGN MANAGER, OR JOAN STONE, OFFICE MANAGER, WILL BE THERE FROM 10 TO 5 DURING THE WEEK. URGENTLY NEEDED ARE PEOPLE AVAILABLE TO DO OFFICE WORK AT THEIR CONVENIENCE DURING THE WEEK. ALSO, BOOKS AND BACK ISSUES OF PERIODICALS WOULD BE WELCOME ON A GIFT OR LOAN BASIS TO PROVIDE SPEECH AND PAMPHLET WRITERS WITH RESEARCH FACILITIES. THE OFFICE COULD ALSO USE DONATIONS OF STATIONERY SUPPLIES AND THE LOAN OF TYPEWRITERS AND FURNITURE, ESPECIALLY FOLDING CHAIRS. FINALLY, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!

VIET-NAM: THE COLONIAL PAST and U.S. INTERVENTION

Most Americans were shocked at the violent anti-Americanism in the recent Buddhist demonstrations. Even in calling for a temporary halt to the demonstrations, the Buddhist leader Thich Tri Quang charged that the U.S. wants "to annihilate the right of the local people to control their government." Why, we ask, are these people ungrateful for our sacrifices? Is it the communists? Many Americans have flattered themselves for too long. Perhaps America does really want to help the South Vietnamese; perhaps Lyndon Johnson's heart is pure. But good intentions do not change facts: America is white while Viet-Nam and most of the rest of the world are colored. America is rich, Viet-Nam and most of the rest of the world are near to starving. America is Christian, western, and because some Americans have \$142 billion invested abroad we desire to keep things as they are around the world. We have 6000 military bases in other people's countries to ensure stability. Viet-Nam is the opposite, that is to say it has been a colonized country. It is determined to change. In 1954 the Vietnamese nationalist army, the Viet Minh, defeated the French and Viet-Nam thought it had become free. Under Diem and military rule, it was not free and that is what the present war is all about.

To understand this war we must understand Viet-Nam's colonial past. The brilliant African psychologist, Frantz Fanon, explains the meaning of colonialism in his book, The Wretched of the Earth:

"The colonial world is a world cut in two...by barracks and police stations. The policeman and the soldiers, by their immediate presence and their frequent and direct action advise [the native] by means of rifle-butts and napalm not to budge. The settler's town is a well-fed town, an easy going town; its belly is always full of good things. The settler's town is a town of white people, of foreigners. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. When you examine at close quarters the colonial context, it is evident that what parcels out the world to begin with is the fact of belonging or not belonging to a given race."

North and South Vietnam shared the experience of colonialism; the experience of being the slave, the wretched and despised one in one's own country, of sweating to make the white man rich. It is in this light that we must see America's involvement in Viet-Nam. The Vietnamese do not hate all white men. Even the French are welcome visitors. But

America is more than a visitor. We must see America's presence in Viet-Nam as the Vietnamese see it.

Today the U.S. had 240,000 troops in Viet-Nam, plus thousands of civilians--technicians, diplomats and the like. As the French before them they mix little with the natives. Saigon has its American quarter. They live well. Vietnamese piers are piled high with goods from America--to bring all the comforts of home to Americans living in Viet-Nam. There are Vietnamese who live from American garbage cans. American soldiers are lonely, so Saigon provides brothels for their benefit. Some 18,373 American troops in Viet-Nam contracted V.D. last year.

The U.S. pays the entire cost of the South Vietnamese army, 75% of the national budget. The Saigon government depends not on local support but on foreign money to run at all. Many of the Vietnamese in this government fought with the French against their own people. Even before the war broke out, the great bulk of American aid to Viet-Nam went toward equipping and training a police force, a secret police and the army. As soon as these forces were ready, Diem, the Catholic ruler Washington hand-picked for this Buddhist land, turned them on his own people in a series of bloody "pacification programs" that finally provoked a revolution. At last President Kennedy disowned Diem, but the Vietnamese have not forgotten that for 9 years he was Washington's man. And Ky, who has said that Hitler is his hero, is hardly any improvement.

Now once again white foreigners kill Vietnamese with guns, bombs, and napalm. Perhaps America is not like France was, but to the Vietnamese things are exactly the way they would be if we were an exploiting colonial power out for domination. Do we need ask again--why are these people ungrateful? They have nothing to be grateful for. Foreign aid has been given to a series of tyrannical governments, not to the Vietnamese people. Official U.S. policy supported the governments because although they have been oppressive they have been anti-communist. But the history and psychology of Viet-Nam makes its people anti-colonial not anti-communist. Thus Diem refused to hold the national elections scheduled by the Geneva Conference for 1956 to reunify Viet-Nam, because as everyone knew the communist Ho Chi Minh would have won by a landslide over the anti-communist Diem, who had remained neutral in the war between France and his own people.

The Viet Cong move easily among the people, eluding our forces and setting up their own attacks. American armed forces have been forced to use torture to get information about the Viet Cong from the people. Saigon and American troops are unwelcome in the rural villages. Why? Most of the land is owned by absentee landlords. When the Viet Minh controlled the area they distributed the land free to the peasants who farmed it. When Diem came to power he gave the land back to the landlords in Paris and Saigon. The

ancient villages were broken up and the people were forced to live in garrisoned camps behind barbed wire "to deprive the Viet Cong of support from the people." Those who criticized the regime were shot, tortured or imprisoned. The Viet Cong are seen by the people as the heirs of the Viet Minh.

Unable to separate the Viet Cong from the people, we bomb and napalm whole villages and destroy crops and food supplies, because possibly the Viet Cong are in the area. The people who flee to government areas from these raids are reported by our government as "refugees from Viet Cong terror." But ideas are stronger than bullets. Time and again American generals have praised the fighting ability and morale of the Viet Cong, who feel they are fighting a war of national liberation. But among Saigon government troops morale is so low that 113,000 of them deserted last year.

It is becoming obvious that Washington is fighting a war not for but against the Vietnamese people. Are we really expected to believe that after fighting eight years for their freedom against the French, the Vietnamese as a people forgot the degradations of colonialism and called for help to the Americans who had supported the French and paid much of their war bill in Viet-Nam? It is even misleading to say Diem, Khanh, Ky and the others simply asked for our help, for they could not have come to power in the first place without U.S. backing.

It is not accidental that all the various governments that have cooperated with us in Viet-Nam have been brutal, corrupt and unpopular. Quite simply in a time of rising nationalism, people like Diem and Ky are the only ones quite willing for the sake of anti-communism to let their country slip back under the dominating influence of a foreign nation and its army. The Vietnamese threw out the French to become masters in their own home, to be once again a free people. They will not consent to occupation or control by the U.S. for the sake of anti-communism or anything else.

It is a dangerous error to underestimate the power and persistence of a people fired up by such patriotism and nationalism. To call the NLF or Viet Cong mere tools of Hanoi or Peking is to make that error. That is what U.S. generals did in deciding to bomb North Viet-Nam--their misunderstanding has cost thousands of Vietnamese lives, hundreds of millions of dollars of U.S. plane losses, losses of U.S. fliers and has not brought the war one bit closer to an end. Communists support and participate in the NLF, but to appreciate that fact does not permit us to ignore the far more profound truth that what sustains North and especially South Vietnamese people--the masses of the people--under so fierce and intense a barrage is the demand for freedom, for full unconditional sovereignty.

John Sinisi

AIM

3rd DISTRICT
CONNECTICUT
89th CONGRESS

